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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/808,730	03/25/2004	Mark F. Cotton	12587-059001/01553-00/US	5641
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EXAMINER				
HAQ, NAEEM U				
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3625				
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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/808,730

**Applicant(s)**

COTTON ET AL.

**Examiner**

Naeem Haq

**Art Unit**

3625

**Period for Reply** -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 and 32-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 and 32-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/26/2007, 12/28/2007
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

**Claims 1-21 and 32-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bezos et al. (US 6,029,141) (“Bezos”) in view of Freeland (US 2002/0169640 A1) in view of Walker et al. (US 6,041,308) (“Walker”) and further in view of Wilmes et al. (US 2002/0116302 A1) (“Wilmes”).**

Bezos teaches a method of managing a multi-vendor online sales channel, the method comprising: receiving from each of a plurality of sellers information describing one or more items for sale (col. 2, lines 3-5; col. 7, lines 21-30); presenting the items for sale to potential buyers through a unified storefront on an online marketplace, and presenting a consistent interface to the potential buyers (col. 2, lines 48-65; col. 13, lines 10-15); receiving through the unified storefront an order from a buyer to purchase an item from one of the sellers (col. 13, lines 16-22). Bezos does not teach employing a transaction processor to take title of the item from the seller to vest title in the unified storefront at a time that a sales transaction of the item occurs for the purchase of the item. However, Freeland teaches that a seller can transfer ownership of an asset through a processing center ([0012]). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate this feature into the invention of the prior art. One of ordinary skill in the

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art would have been motivated to do so in order to allow an intermediate, third party to facilitate the transaction. Moreover, Bezos teaches that merchant (i.e. unified storefront) is responsible for shipping the products (col. 6, lines 41-44). Thus the merchant has "flash title" to the purchased item prior to fulfilling the buyer's order because it has ownership of the products from the time of order to the time of delivery.

Bezos does not teach masking identities of the plurality of sellers. However, Walker teaches a system and method for conditional purchase offers that keeps the seller's identities anonymous (col. 6, lines 36-42). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate the teachings of Walker into the invention of Bezos. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to enable sellers to participate in the CPO process without fear of undercutting their published price structures and losing their regular customer base, as taught by Walker.

The cited prior art does not teach determining information for an amount of sales tax based on a residence or situs of an operator of the unified storefront. However, Wilmes teaches that the sales tax of a transaction over a network can be based on a variety of locations such as the location of the buyer, location of the seller, location of the ISP, or any combination thereof ([0047] and [0061]). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to collect a tax based on the location of the seller (i.e. merchant) in the cited prior art. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to collect taxes from all the appropriate entities in a transaction.

Finally, Bezos teaches collecting payment from the buyer (col. 6, lines 41-44) and reporting statistics relating to the buyer's purchase of the item to a merchant that offered the item for sale on the unified storefront (col. 16, lines 10-19). Bezos does not teach that the payment includes sales tax. However, Wilmes teaches that the sales tax of a transaction over a network can be based on a variety of locations such as the location of the buyer, location of the seller, location of the ISP, or any combination thereof ([0047] and [0061]). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to collect a tax based on the location of the seller (i.e. merchant) in the cited prior art. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to collect taxes from all the appropriate entities in a transaction.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naeem Haq whose telephone number is (571)-272-6758. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey A. Smith can be reached on (571)-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Naeem Haq/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3625

March 31, 2008